

REMARKS

Claims 11 - 20 are pending. No changes to these claims are made in this amendment.

Claims 11 - 17 are to the system, and 18 - 20 are method claims.

All claims stand rejected on §103 on Marsh Ref. AM in view of Atkins Ref. AL.

I

There are several points of novelty in applicant's system and method over the prior art.

One object of applicant's invention is

... after identification of the detected transponder, the interrogator unit, ... again modifies its interrogation signal [i.e. a second modified interrogation signal] so as to extend the watching state of the silent transponders and, ... sends a command to the identified transponder, ...
specification at page 6, lines 3 - 9

According to [this] application, this command consists of an exchange of password, a writing or reading of information to/from the transponder microcircuit memory, or the loading or modification of a program contained in the transponder microcircuit memory.
specification, page 15, lines 24 - 28

In both of the applied prior art references there is no teaching and no suggestion of applicant's feature of a second modified interrogation signal. This second modified interrogation signal extends the watching (mute or sleep)

state (or time) of the silent transponders. The supplemental time period(s) is(are) used to send commands to the identified transponder. This is shown in Fig. 4 at loop 4.2, and in Fig. 5 at loop 5.4.

Claim 18 has this and other features not in the prior art. Please refer to Fig. 3, which shows keeping open a communication channel (anti-collision channel) between the interrogator and the identified transponder in order to send commands and exchange reading and writing. In Fig. 3 this is done during time D2. Time D2 is a supplemental time period, added after time period D1. The functions performed in time D2 are different from those performed during D1. The teaching to obtain D2, and the steps or sequence of D2, are not shown in and are not suggested by the prior art.

The functions performed during time D2 are included in claim 18, see claim 18, steps g through j.

Claim 19, dependant on claim 18, repeats the D2 cycle. Claim 19 defines multiple (or several) sequential cycles and commands. This is shown in Fig. 4, loops 4.2, and in Fig. 5, loop 5.4. Here as many commands and cycles of the loops may be implemented as are needed. This is not in the prior art references!

II

Another feature of applicant's invention -- as shown in Fig. 3 by the legend E -- is that after the interrogator has read the identification signal (In) from the first (or identified) transponder (TR1), then the identified first transponder (TR1) goes into a listening mode (E). This enables, if desired, a communication between the interrogator and the identified first transponder (TR1). This is included in claim 18, step f.

In the second listening mode [time] D2 as shown in Fig. 3; and after a command and execution of the command (EXE) and a reply signal (REP), there is a "listening mode" E; see Fig. 3. second waveform, "Id-E-EXE-R-E", note: the last E. See also E shown in Fig. 5, loop 5.4. This "last E" in loop 5.4 permits a subsequent D2 cycle; and if desired several D2 cycles one after the other. See claim 19. Also, it is not shown in, and not suggested by, the prior art.

After execution (EXE) of the command (C) by the first identified transponder (TR1), then the first identified transponder (TR1) sends a reply signal (REP or R) to the interrogator. This is shown in Figs. 3, 4, and 5. and reference is made to Claim 18, step j.

III

It might be helpful in order to better understand the differences between this application and the two references to draw three time-charts -- one for the application and the others for the references. Each would show the sequence of events beginning with the interrogator turning on, and one transponder responding, . . . through an entire cycle, and the beginning of the subsequent cycle with another transponder. Comparison of the three charts shows that:

- * Applicant's D1 sequence is different from the prior art.
- * There is no D2 sequence in the prior art comparable to applicant's.
- * There is no repetitive D2 sequences in the prior art.

If the Office wishes applicant's attorney will be happy to discuss this further at an interview.

IV

Claim 11 is the independent device claim. It includes features not found in the prior art: -- the listening mode (E), the additional time(s) D2, and the command instruction(s) (C) that take place during the additional time (D2).

Claim 14 has details of subsequent listening-mode time (E) and extending the time durations by new modification of the interrogation signal.

V

Some general comments on the combined references may be in order. The specification acknowledged and discussed both references. Atkins refers to Marsh, incorporates it "by reference", and apparently relies on details of Marsh to support his specification. But Atkins points to the disadvantages of Marsh's system. He does not like Marsh's "time synchronization" and substitutes or invents a different system with "mute and wake-up" signals. Atkins TEACHES AWAY from using a timing system (and perhaps only uses a simple one for backup). The thrust of Atkins is his "mute and wake-up" system, is in opposition to Marsh's timing system. Atkins teaches away from, i.e. not to use a timing system.

Neither reference suggests combining the *system* approach of the other. It is with hindsight of the teaching of applicant's invention that one looks for pieces of applicant's invention in these two references, and indeed Atkins teaches away from use of certain aspects of Marsh, particularly the timing system of Marsh. In any event,

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applicant's invention as claimed is much more than and an advance over these two references,

It is also noted that both references were cited and applied during the examination of applicant's corresponding EPO application. The EPO application was subsequently allowed over both these references. A copy of the EPO case was submitted to the Office and should be in the application file.

VI

Applicant's invention achieves some stated objectives and teaches a system and a method to attain those goals. Applicant's system and method is different from, and is new over, the applied art. It has features, structure, and sequences not in the prior art and not suggested in the prior art.

A Notice of Allowance is courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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